

GLARING EYESORES ON OUR STREETS.

REPULSIVE BEGGARS THAT ARE A DISGRACE TO THE CITY.

MANY OF THE MENDICANTS POSSESS CONSIDERABLE PROPERTY.

THEIR PRESENCE ILLEGAL.

CRIPPLES AND ALMS-SEEKERS MAY BE KEPT FROM PUBLIC PLACES.

The street beggars of San Francisco are a disgrace to the community. They are unlawful parasites, and they are frequently lawless. They have become an eyesore to the inhabitants, and they are shocking sights to visitors. If the evil is allowed to continue, San Francisco will gain a reputation that will excel that of the beggar cities of Southern Europe.

The manner in which the blind, the maimed and the pretended cripples have divided up this city in respect to stands whereat to ply their mendicancy has reached such a pitch that a person can hardly pass a street corner without suddenly coming upon a sight, not only revolting to delicate women, but sickening to strong men. The blind have their stationary location, but the cripples hobble about, getting in the way of persons so as to purposely block their path. If refused money, curses and frequently blows with crutches follow the demand.

Few of the unfortunates are entitled to the charity they obtain. Most of them are criminals, or at least of a vicious nature. That a blind man could successfully commit a burglary and that a man with one leg and one arm could beat a strong man virtually to death are hard statements to believe, but such criminals are now in the State prison paying the penalty of their misdeeds. That the sight of a hideously blinded woman glaring up at a young lady would cause the latter to faint and nervous prostration result sounds like a tale of the imagination, but such an occurrence took place recently at the foot of the stairs leading to a photograph gallery on Post street. Women are frequently seriously startled by the sudden appearance of a deformed man, and men are greatly harassed by the great army of cripples and wrecks who accost, follow and persist in importuning.

This state of affairs would not exist if the laws were enforced. The indolent tramp who is too lazy to work would be imprisoned and the blind or crippled unfortunate would be given a comfortable home either in a blind asylum or the almshouse provided the local ordinances were put into effect. The law is plain on the subject and if the police officers were only instructed to do their duty the streets would be cleared of its hideous sights and its vicious paupers within twenty-four hours. The orders of the police to "move on" would be obeyed and this city would be rid of a most objectionable class of imported parasites.

Even those deserving of charity would be far better off in a properly conducted almshouse than on the street. According to their own stories they eke out a most miserable existence, live in squalor on a few cents a day, clothe themselves in rags and suffer for comforts furnished to even animals. The truth is that many of the unfortunates have money saved up, while those who are in daily need are generally in that condition because of their own vices. Those vagrants of this class do not wish to be placed in a home because they could secure no liquor there, and as many are confirmed drunkards they strive hard to keep out of the poorhouse. Still they occupy bunks in the City Prison or the almshouse more frequently than anywhere else.

The better class among the blind, crippled and infirm prefer the precarious existence afforded by an "independent" mode of life to living upon a regular charity. Under the thin disguise of selling pencils they contend that they are not as much the objects of charity as if they were in the poorhouse. The truth is that they prefer the life of the streets and the chance to have a glass of beer and whisky whenever they want it to the confinement and the regular routine of a large charitable institution. It is the desire to do as they please which makes them all want to beg for a living. Therefore by the non-enforcement of the law the streets are littered with the hideously blind, the shockingly deformed and the sickeningly infirm.

The people pay taxes for the support of these unfortunates in an institution where comfort, good air and good food are supposed to be given to them. Having once paid for their support many citizens object to contributing toward the paupers' desire to drink and toward the maintenance of revolting spectacles on street corners.

There is a chance now for San Francisco to become a great city within a short time and progressive citizens object to exhibits of beggars which lead visitors to believe that there is a very large pauper element here and that it is due to general poverty in the land. This is not true, as nearly every beggar has been imported from some other country.

The police are often hindered in doing their duty by the false sympathies of some people. If a policeman arrest a beggar, be he blind or a drunken cripple, the crowd will often abuse the officer for imposing upon a poor unfortunate. The policeman realizes to some extent that he is a public servant, and to oblige those who possess of false sympathies, or those devoid of sense, he uses his judgment and violates the law.

The people do not understand that the arrested man is being taken into custody for his own good and for the public welfare.

The beggars are a nuisance to the police, and the latter will be only too willing to run them away when they learn they disobey the law by allowing

ing the vagrants and maimed to remain in public places.

The majority of the beggars are cripples, and curiously enough these are given more money than the blind, though the loss of sight is considered the greater misfortune. Still the cripple can look appealingly at a passer-by and the blind man is virtually also dumb and deaf. Most of the cripples have met with the loss of limbs through their own viciousness. The majority when possessed of a sound body were tramps, who have fallen while drunk from brake-beams on trains and escaped with their lives by the loss of their limbs. This new physical deformity adds to their mental deformity, and they drift to large cities to become beggars and thieves. Nearly all their money goes for drink, and many of the constant "strikers" in this city are addicted to the habit of drinking Chinatown gin, one drink of which puts a man into a semi-unconscious sleep for a couple of hours. When they descend to drinking Chinatown gin they are forever lost.

Some of the more hideous street beggars have been arrested recently and others have been driven away by Police Officer Peter Richter, whose beat is on Kearny street, and who has made a small crusade of his own. The almost blind organ grinder with a head and face of a dried skull, who used to sit on corners along Kearny street, will be seen here no more.

The drunken blind Indian "Andrew," with the sickening red eyeballs, who plays a harmonica and runs wildly through the streets, has been at the almshouse for two weeks.

Two men, hardly more than boys, who are to be seen on the streets every few months, are about as good samples of misdirected-charity receivers as any known. One of these boys is legless. The other stands behind him and plays an accordion. When they obtain their day's contributions they haunt the dives on Mission street and consort with the lowest whites and negroes, who mingle there together. Both of the boys have led abandoned lives for years.

Three of San Francisco's most noted beggars may never be seen here again. They are John Kinlock, Joseph Caley and Dick Bannister. Bannister has been banished. He is an armless man who plays a hand-organ. He wears leather bands on the stumps of his arms, and connects the handle of the organ with the stump of his right arm. Bannister became a loathsome drunkard and was compelled to leave the city. Bannister created a sensation at San Jose once. He and three legless men did such a flourishing business in the Garden City that they planned a novel spree. The four cripples hired a four-in-hand and drove to Mount Hamilton, visited the Lick Observatory and got on a wild drunk afterward.

Joseph Caley is a blind Mexican boy. He appears to be about 20 or 25 years of age. He is short, but fairly stout in stature and is badly pockmarked. His habit was to stand in front of the White House on Post street. He would almost shut his sightless eyes, hold his hat in front of him and stand still for hours. He was always in bad odor with the police, as they frequently found him among gangs of petty thieves when raids would be made. It is this Mexican boy who, though totally blind, robbed a store at midnight and got to his room, a mile from the scene of the robbery, and was then only caught by accident. About three months ago Caley and Fred Lane, aged 17, went to a grocery store on Post street. Caley opened the door with a skeleton key. Both entered the place and loaded themselves down with plunder. Caley was led back to his room on Montgomery avenue, near Kearny, and the boy started for his own room. Two policemen saw him, and as his actions were suspicious they searched him. They found some of the stolen goods and Lane became so scared he betrayed his companion. One of the policemen went to Caley's room and there he found a number of whisky bottles, some boxes of cigarettes and other plunder. The trial of the two burglars came off before Superior Judge Bahrs two weeks ago. The blind Mexican burglar and tempter of younger boys was convicted and sentenced to four years' imprisonment in San Quentin. The Lane boy was sent to the Preston Industrial School.

The most vicious beggar known to the police of San Francisco is now in San Quentin serving a term of five years for assault to murder. He is John Kinlock and was seen daily on the streets of San Francisco until three years ago. Kinlock had only one leg and one arm. But the stump of his right leg was a dangerous weapon. Kinlock's right leg was cut off at the knee. With this stump Kinlock, while standing on crutches, would strike men vicious blows in the abdomen, almost depriving them of sensibility through excessive pain. Kinlock's habit was to walk the streets, get in the way of men and women and keep there as long as possible. Kinlock was more or less under the influence of liquor all the time, except during the many periods following his arrest. When refused money on the street he would hit men with the stump of his leg or his crutch, and to women who passed him by no language was too revolting for him to use. He was feared by his comrades, even the able-bodied ones. He was often suspected of committing petty crimes, such as "rolling" drunks, but the police never succeeded in catching him until one night three years ago. Kinlock and Tom Barry induced a drunken man who had money on him to leave a Barbary Coast saloon and go with them to a street, a little alley near the corner of Jackson and Sansome streets. As soon as the trio were in a dark spot Kinlock hit the victim over the head with his crutch and felled him to the ground. He then beat the man into insensibility and left him dead, after taking all the money and valuable in his clothes. Kinlock was convicted and sentenced to five years imprisonment. It was a light sentence as Kinlock's victim never fully recovered. Kinlock has been unable to work and his money by lending sums at high rates of interest. Since the beating and robbery he has been so deranged that he has become very weak mentally as well as physically.

A COMPLETE AND POSITIVE LAW

Beggars and Unseemly Persons Prohibited

The law regarding the cases of beggars

whether they be infirm, blind, crippled or unsightly, is very plain. The law was made for the purpose of keeping beggars and fakirs off the street, and the Alms-house was created for the purpose of giving the unfortunate a home. This home is supposed to be conducted in a better way than any of the places where the beggars exist. The people are taxed for the support of the poor, and there is no reason why such sights as are to be seen about the streets daily should be inflicted upon the community. The mendicants should not be sent to jail or the Alms-house for a few days or weeks and then be allowed to return to the street corners again. Section 29 of the general orders of the Board of Supervisors, entitled "To prohibit street-begging and to restrain certain persons from appearing in streets and public places," reads as follows:

No person shall, either directly or indirectly, whether by look, word, sign or deed, practice begging or mendicancy in or on any of the streets, highways or thoroughfares of the city and county of San Francisco, nor in any public place.

On the conviction of any person for practicing mendicancy or begging, if it shall appear that such person is without means of support and infirm and physically unable to earn a support and livelihood, or is, for any cause, a proper person to be maintained at the Alms-house, such person may be committed to the Alms-house.

Any person who is diseased, maimed, mutilated or in any way deformed, so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object, or an improper person to be allowed in or on the streets, highways, thoroughfares or public places in this city and county, shall not therein or thereon expose himself or herself to public view.

On the conviction of any person for a violation of any of the provisions of the next preceding clause of this section, if it shall seem proper and just, the fine and imprisonment provided for may be omitted and such person sent to the Alms-house.

It is hereby made the duty of the police officers to arrest any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this section.

A PIONEER OF BEGGARS.

Henry J. Powell's Misery After Amassing Considerable Wealth.

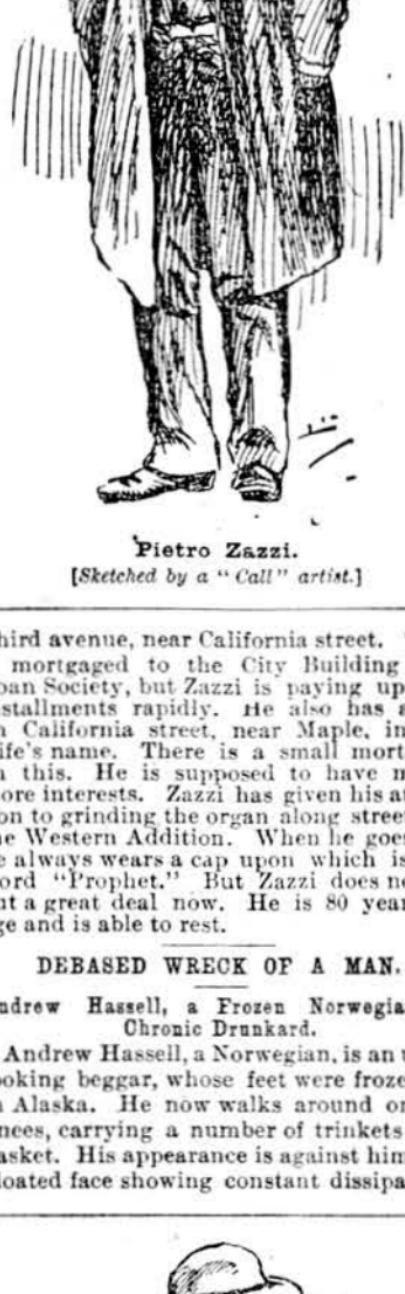
The most painful object on the streets is the most prominent one. Henry J. Powell, better known as the "paralyzed old xylophone player," whose stand has been for years at the corner of Sutter and Kearny streets, is a good example of what continuous professional begging makes of an unfortunate. For many years the white-haired man has been seen daily by thou-

about \$2000 in bank in this city. Neither Powell nor his "banker," Charles S. Fechheimer of the Plaza stores, 706 Kearny street, will tell just what Powell has, but state that it is about that sum. Mr. Fechheimer has taken care of the old man's money for ten years and is now trying to make arrangements to get him from his miserable surroundings to a place of quiet and comfort. Some people incline to the belief that Powell owns a considerable interest in Fechheimer's store.

"PROPHET" AND HIS PROPERTY.

An Italian Organ-Grinder of the Well-Known Old Style.

Pietro Zazzi is a beggar of the old style. He is a genuine Italian organ-grinder, and has plied that vocation for twenty years. He has traveled all over the coast and has made a large amount of money. He now lives at 525 Greenwich street, near Stockton. He owns the place, but it is mortgaged. He also owns a house and lot on



Pietro Zazzi.

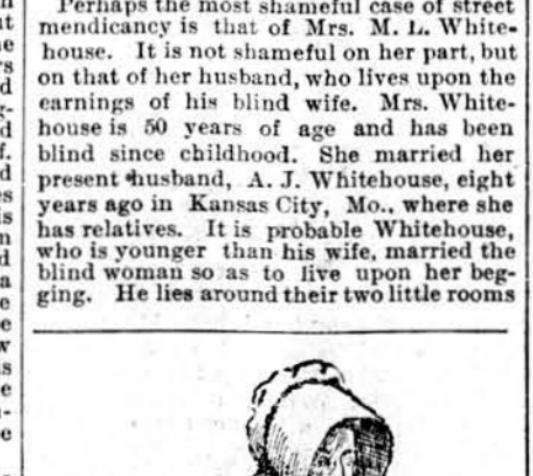
[Sketched by a "Call" artist.]

Third avenue, near California street. This is mortgaged to the City Building and Loan Society, but Zazzi is paying up the installments rapidly. He also has a lot on California street, near Maple, in his wife's name. There is a small mortgage on this. He is supposed to have many more interests. Zazzi has given his attention to grinding the organ along streets in the Western Addition. When he goes out he always wears a cap upon which is the word "Prophet." But Zazzi does not go out a great deal now. He is 80 years of age and is able to rest.

DEBASED WRECK OF A MAN.

Andrew Hassell, a Frozen Norwegian, a Chronic Drunkard.

Andrew Hassell, a Norwegian, is an ugly-looking beggar, whose feet were frozen off in Alaska. He now walks around on his knees, carrying a number of trinkets in a basket. His appearance is against him, his bloated face showing constant dissipation.



Andrew Hassell.

[Sketched by a "Call" artist.]

Hassell, crippled and a beggar, manages to provide for himself and a woman known as Nellie Mullins. They live in a room in the notorious Jessie-street lodging house. They are nearly always drunk, continually fighting, and they would not be tolerated in any other kind of house than that in which they now live. It is one in which the vilest of all classes consort, negroes and whites together. Hassell is a debased wretch, upon whom charity is badly misspent.

KEPT BY A BLIND WIFE.

A. J. Whitehouse Leaves While His Better Half Begs.

Perhaps the most shameful case of street mendicancy is that of Mrs. M. L. Whitehouse. It is not shameful on her part, but on that of her husband, who lives upon the earnings of his blind wife. Mrs. Whitehouse is 50 years of age and has been blind since childhood. She married her present husband, A. J. Whitehouse, eight years ago in Kansas City, Mo., where she has relatives. It is probable Whitehouse blind woman so as to live upon her beg-

ging. He lies around their two little rooms in the third story of a rookery in the rear of 344 Third street, while his wife often allows his wife to come alone.

Mrs. Whitehouse.

[Sketched by a "Call" artist.]

